(b) to (d) Unexploded bomb shells are destroyed after the firing is over by the units or the Army formation carrying out the firing. The police and civil administration, after joint inspection with the Army, also issue a "No Damage Certificate' at the end of the firing and before they leave the area. All safety precautions are taken in accordance with the Range Standing Orders before carrying out the firing. These include the posting of sentries at entry/exit points of the range, hoisting of flags and use of bugle calls as warnings both at beginning and end of the practice. As entry during the firing is illegal, no compensation is payable to the intruders for the injury during such practice while the firing is in progress at the range.

Manufacturing of LCA

†2139. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have manufactured the first Light Combat Aircraft;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the said combat aircraft is likely to be tested; and

(d) what expenditure is likely to be incurred on the manufacture of combat aircraft?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The first Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Technology Demonstrator (TD-1) has been developed. The second aircraft (TD-2) is under integration. Work is also in progress on making LCA prototype vehicles.

(b) and (c) LCA TD-1 and TD-2 aircraft have been designed to increase confidence and reduce risk in development and manufacture of the LCA. In the development phase, it would use the GE-404 engine as the interim power pack. Subsequently, the indigenously developed Kaveri engine would be evaluated and used. The technologies incorporated in the LCA include quadruplex digital flight control, advanced avionics and composite materials. The maiden flight of LCA (TD-1) aircraft is targetted in the first half of year 2000.

(d) Full Scale Engineering Development (FSED) Phase-I of the LCA project, which is in progress currently, has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 2188 crore. The cost of Phase-II of the programme is estimated at Rs. 2950 crore. The

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

manufacturing cost of each combat aircraft is estimated to be about Rs. 90 crore. The total manufacturing cost would depend on the numbers to be produced.

Enquiry into Defence Deals

†2140. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Defence are planning to conduct an enquiry into defence deals made by India during the last few years; if so, the name of such deals alongwith the reasons for conducting such an enquiry; and

(b) whether Ministry of Defence propose to conduct an enquiry into the deals concerning Sukhoi-aircraft as well; if so, whether any enquiry has so far been started or not; what is the latest position of enquiry?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) With a view to ensure absolute probity in defence procurements and in deference to the suggestions made by the Hon'ble Members of Parliament during the course of the Short Duration Discussion in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd December 1999 on Defence Procurement Procedures, Government has requested the C&AG to carry out a review/Speical Audit of the allegations pertaining to:

(i) excessively and wrongly bought spares that are reportedly lying as junk in various depots,

(ii) alleged irregularities in emergency procurements for Kargil operations; and

(iii) non-transfer of technology, even though contracted and paid for

For the same reasons, the Government has also requested the Central Vigilance Commission for instituting a probe by the CBI or any other appropriate agency into the following allegations:

(i) involvement of agents/middlemen in major Defence deals after imposition of ban on involvement of agents,

(ii) allegations made during the course of Short Duration discussion in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd December 1999 regarding irregularities in Defence procurements, and

(iii) allegation made in the writ petition filed by a serving Rear Admiral in the Delhi High Court.

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